

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LK180
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Name of Service:	Rainbow Childcare Academy Ltd
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Address of Service:	Unit 22 Block A, River Point, Bishops Quay, Limerick, Co. Limerick
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Eircode:	V94 ND89
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Name of Registered Provider:	Nichola McEwan
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date(s) of Inspection:	31/10/2023
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No of pre-school children:	AM	27	PM	25
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Office, 2 nd Floor Estuary House, Henry Street Limerick.
Inspection undertaken by:	M Riordan
Title:	Early Years Inspector

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable
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Description of service

Rainbow Academy is a full day care pre-school service located in an apartment complex in the center of Limerick city. It offers a service to children from 1 year to 6 years of age. A service for school aged children is offered each afternoon. The service operates from 7.30am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday.

The service operates from 2 adjacent Apartment blocks, with the younger children accommodated in Block A and the older children accommodated in Block B.

In Block A there is a Wobbler and Toddler Room, 3 Sleep rooms, a kitchen and a staff room. In Block B there are 3 Pre-school rooms that accommodate the children over 3 years of age and the school aged children. Two separate outdoor spaces are accessible for all children, one adjacent to Block A and the second close to Block B.

Staffing

The registered provider is the designated person in charge of operating the service. A deputy manager is also employed at the facility. There are an additional 12 staff working at the preschool. Relief staff are available to cover staff holidays and absenteeism when required. All staff have achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education, or a course deemed to be the equivalent of same.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

Additional Information

The inspection was triggered by information received by the Early Years Inspectorate.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,*
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and*

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,*
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,*
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and*
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*
- (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and*
- (c) these Regulations.*

Compliance Information

- (1)(a) The registered provider was on leave on the day of the inspection. A designated person in charge was present on the day of the inspection. There was a person available who was able to deputise if required.
- (b) During the period of the inspection, the designated person in charge was present and the staff roster indicated that a person in charge was always available at the service.
- (2)(a) Two written and validated references were available for 2 new staff employed at the service since the service was last inspected on the 23rd of March 2023.
- (b) Where past employer references were not available, there were references from reputable sources available.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the 2 new staff members employed at the service since the previous inspection.
- (d) Police vetting was available for the 1 new staff who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction.
- (4) The 2 new staff members employed at the service since the last inspection held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education.
- (7) The registered provider ensured that all new staff were provided with appropriate information and training in relation to the policies of the service.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

- (1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.*
- (2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.*
- (4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*
- (a) a sessional pre-school service, and*

Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider ensured that the number of adults present in the service met the requirements of the Regulation 11. Relief staff were also available to help at busy times during the day.
- (2) On the day of the inspection there were 27 pre-school children present with 8 staff members during the morning. In the afternoon there were 25 pre-school children present with 7 staff members. The adult/child ratio was correct at the time of the unannounced inspection.
- (4)(a) The sessional service operating in Preschool Room 2 and 3 were closed on the day of the inspection.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

- (1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-
- (a) each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily life of the pre-school service through the provision of the appropriate activities, interaction, materials and equipment, having regard to the age and stage of development of the child

Compliance Information

BASIC NEEDS:

There was a healthy eating policy implemented at the service. Nutritious hot meals and snacks were served to each individual room. A menu plan outlining the foods served for the week was shared with all parents. Younger children were observed eating in highchairs and older children had their meals at low level tables and chairs.

Sanitary accommodation was located close to each room in the service. Nappy changing facilities were provided in Block A close to the Wobbler and Toddler room. All toiletries for the children were safely stored and clearly labelled and were located within easy reach of staff. Foot pedal operated, lidded bins were used for the safe disposal of used nappies. Parents of the younger children were given a daily report with written information shared on their sleep times, the foods and drinks consumed, the nappy changes and the activities the child engaged in during each day.

Each room had a supply of tissues and wipes within range of the children. Childrens beakers and cups were clearly labelled.

Childrens personal belongings were stored in clearly labelled boxes outside the Toddler room.

There were 3 designated sleep rooms available in Block A to facilitate sleep times for all children when tired and not just at specific times during the day. All children were closely monitored while sleep and all checks were documented.

Children had access to 2 well-resourced outdoor play areas at the service. Appropriate outdoor coats, hats and boots were worn by the children while outside.

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

A wide range of play-based activities and games were accessible both indoors and outdoors for all age groups at the facility. In the Wobbler rooms there were many floor-based activities with soft rubber floor matting providing a safe area for children who were learning to crawl, stand and walk. A large soft leather chair was available to facilitate staff sitting and holding the younger children. A wall mounted black board and large chinks were accessible to encourage mark making opportunities. Lots of sensorial play equipment and sound making toys were accessible in clear plastic boxes on low level open shelving. A good range of reading material was accessible in a low-level timber book trolley. Soft low level couches were available to the children to sit and relax with a book.

In the Toddler room, there were numerous table-top activities observed taking place with staff and children engaged in creative play events. Halloween decorations made by the children were displayed on the walls of the room. Low level tables and chairs were available for dining at mealtimes and for table top activities. Construction play areas, imaginative play spaces and sensorial play opportunities were all easily accessible in the room.

Outdoors children had space to run, to climb, to balance and to use ride on toys. Many of the indoor toys were taken outside when weather was favourable.